

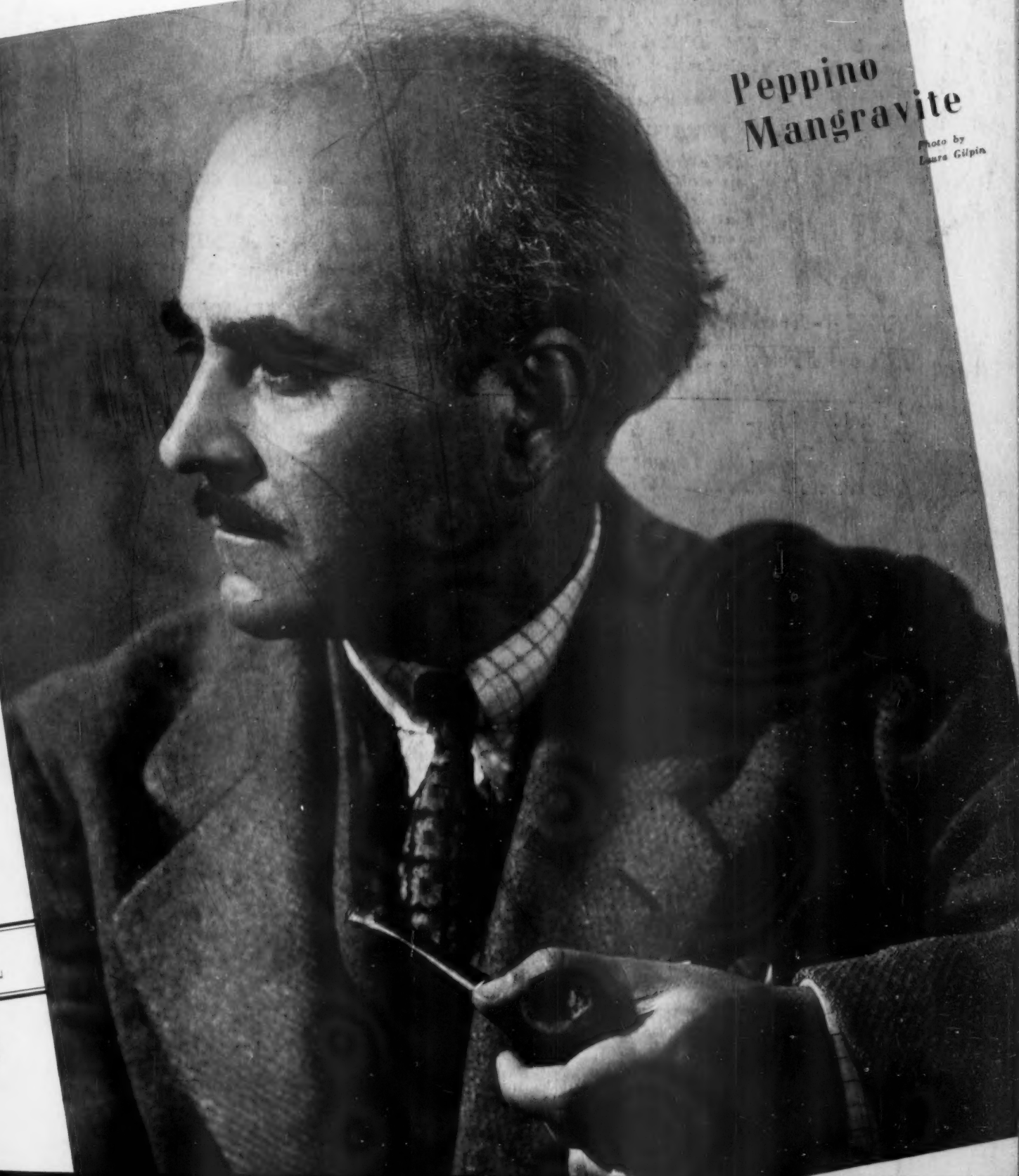
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# AMERICAN ARTIST

MAR 28 1941

Peppino  
Mangravite

Photo by  
Laura Gilpin



APRIL

35c

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**AND YOU?**





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*Photo by Laura Gilpin*

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April 1941

## "The Greeks, the Greeks"



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# Peppino Mangravite

Peppino Mangravite spends no longer than a single painting day on any of his canvases. But that final act, like an operatic performance when the curtain goes up on the opening night, has been preceded by innumerable rehearsals which have gradually brought the artist's conception to fruition and his facility to a point of confident mastery. Into the six or seven canvases which ultimately consume but as many days in their actual painting, Mangravite puts the creative energy and preparatory study of an entire year.

The purpose and methods of an artist are deeply mysterious to his fellow men who, by and large, think of him primarily as a craftsman, a fellow who has developed a great knack for delineating form and combining colors. If they credit him with genius it is a genius that flows from his hand rather than from his head. And too often they are right. For much of the world's art is nothing more than the reflection of life's superficial highlights which attract the painter's passing notice.

But the really great artist is a profound student searching for the underpainting of the human panorama. He sees and paints more than appears to the casual eye. What finally he sets down on canvas is something deeply felt and pondered as well as seen in the relationship of man to man and man to nature. It is something more than an incidental effect; it has a positive direction. This recalls an experience Mangravite had with Matisse, which he tells as follows:

"Having been invited to have luncheon with Matisse and a party of friends, I appeared at his studio at the appointed hour, entered unannounced and discovered that the French master was at work on a canvas, so wholly engrossed that he had not noticed my arrival. I waited quietly in the background until he laid down his brushes and discovered my presence. I urged him not to let me interrupt him, but he assured me that I had not. 'I had just finished,' he declared. His remark puzzled me because I had noticed that a small section of his canvas had no paint on it at all.

"Wanting to satisfy my curiosity, I kept trying to gather enough courage during luncheon to ask him why he had said his canvas was finished when a section of it was still untouched by his brush. Finally I did put the question to him. Matisse himself seemed puzzled by my question. He said he could not remember that any section of the canvas had not been covered with color and he kept thinking about his picture, trying to recall every detail of it.

"Upon returning to the studio he went at once to his picture, then turned to me smiling and said, 'Well, I had not noticed it, but it's perfectly all right. When I set myself to work I always start with a definite direction in my mind. In the painting of this picture I fol-

lowed a certain direction. As I developed the picture I suddenly discovered that I had completed my direction. Why go further?' "

An artist's direction is, as we have said, the result of his profound contemplation of life and of nature. But it is more than that. It is conditioned by what the man himself is. And that goes back to the day of his birth, even before.

The circumstances of one's birth and childhood are always important but with Mangravite they had more than the usual effect upon his life and his art. He was born on the tiny island of Lipari which lies a few miles off the northern coast of Sicily. Its name would scarcely be known to the world but for its use by Italy as a penal colony for her political prisoners.

On the closely guarded island of exile Peppino, the son of an Italian naval officer stationed on Lipari, spent many impressionable years in the strange environment of social ostracism, where his association with political outcasts profoundly influenced his thought and character. For these political though "dangerous" to the state were, naturally enough, men of intellect and imagination. His experience among them did much in shaping the background for his career. It gave the sensitive youth a serious outlook on life. The lad even received his first art training here, for one of the politicals, an artist, took the boy into his studio as an apprentice and taught him the beginnings of the painter's craft. His formal art education was continued on the Italian mainland and when only fourteen he was dissecting cadavers as part of his training in anatomy.

Upon his father's retirement from the navy in 1912, the family moved to New York. But Peppino soon returned to Europe to study and when still in his teens was studying in Paris. Back in New York in 1914 he painted by himself for six months, then became a student at Cooper Union. In 1917 he entered Robert Henri's class in the Art Students League.

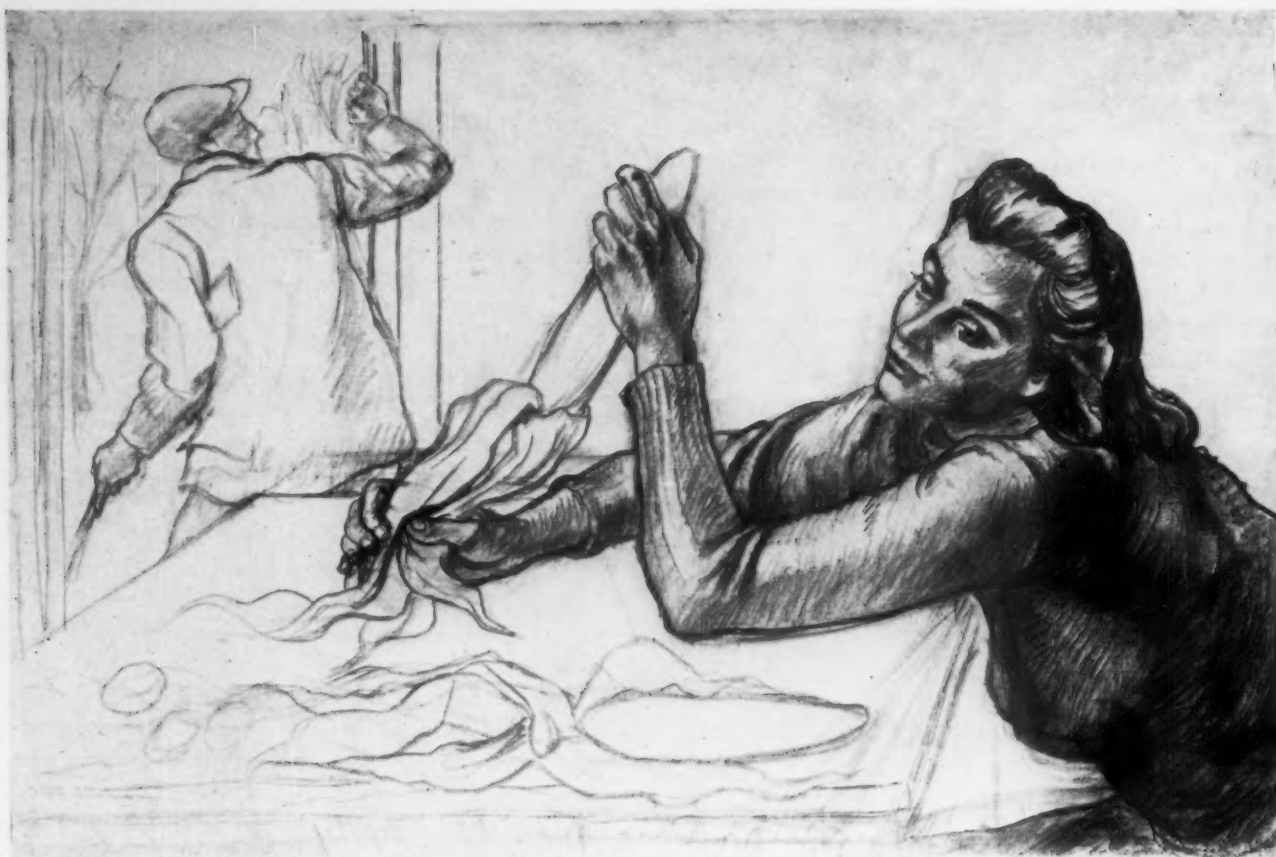
So much for the early, formative years. To give even an outline of successive events in his career up to his recent successes would call for space not at our command here. To skip over them is of course an important omission but we must get back to Mangravite's studio and see just how he goes about his work.

Although his pictures are actually painted during the summer in the barn studio of his country home in the Adirondacks, they have their beginnings months before in New York where the artist and his family spend the winter. After he decides upon a picture motive, Mangravite mulls over the idea continuously and begins the study of its composition in a series of small pencil sketches. Then come innumerable drawings from nature and from models.

A family is an incomparable asset to an artist for his models are always with him. Not only does he draw them incessantly, but their every mood, expression, action, constantly observed are automatically recorded upon his sensitized mind. So Mangravite's charming wife and his

*detail, reproduced at exact size, of the original charcoal working study for "Autumn" by Peppino Mangravite.*

*This is the last of a series of preparatory studies leading up to the final painting on canvas. From this drawing a transfer is made to the canvas. The series of the stylus, used in making the transfer, show as light lines here and there*



*Reproduction of the charcoal study for "Autumn" by Peppino Mangravite. From this study the lines of the drawing are transferred to the canvas as described in the text*

two daughters, Nina and Denise, are not only the artist's delight in a happy family relationship; they serve as models for many of his canvases, though they do not appear as portraits in his subject pictures.

"After the composition is organized," explains Mangravite, "I make a careful study for my picture in gouache. I do this with infinite care. Sometimes I work on it for a considerable time, at any rate until I feel it is what I want, for this gouache is my working study.

"The next step is a careful working drawing the exact size of the picture to be painted on the canvas. This I usually make on tracing paper with charcoal. From this charcoal drawing the outlines are transferred to the canvas which has been coated with an egg tempera ground. The transfer is made before this ground has completely dried. While it is in a semi-dry condition first a piece of thin cellophane is laid down upon it, then the drawing. The cellophane is to protect the back of the drawing from the soft ground. The transfer is made by gently going over the outlines with a stylus. This lifts off some of the ground and leaves a delicate tracery of the drawing on the canvas.

"Now when all this preliminary study and work have been done and I am ready to paint the final canvas, I mix up lumps of oil pigment to match the principal colors in the gouache painting, so I will not have to take time for this while I am painting. I put these pigments on a glass submerged in water to keep them fresh over night.

"The next morning I start early, perhaps at five-thirty

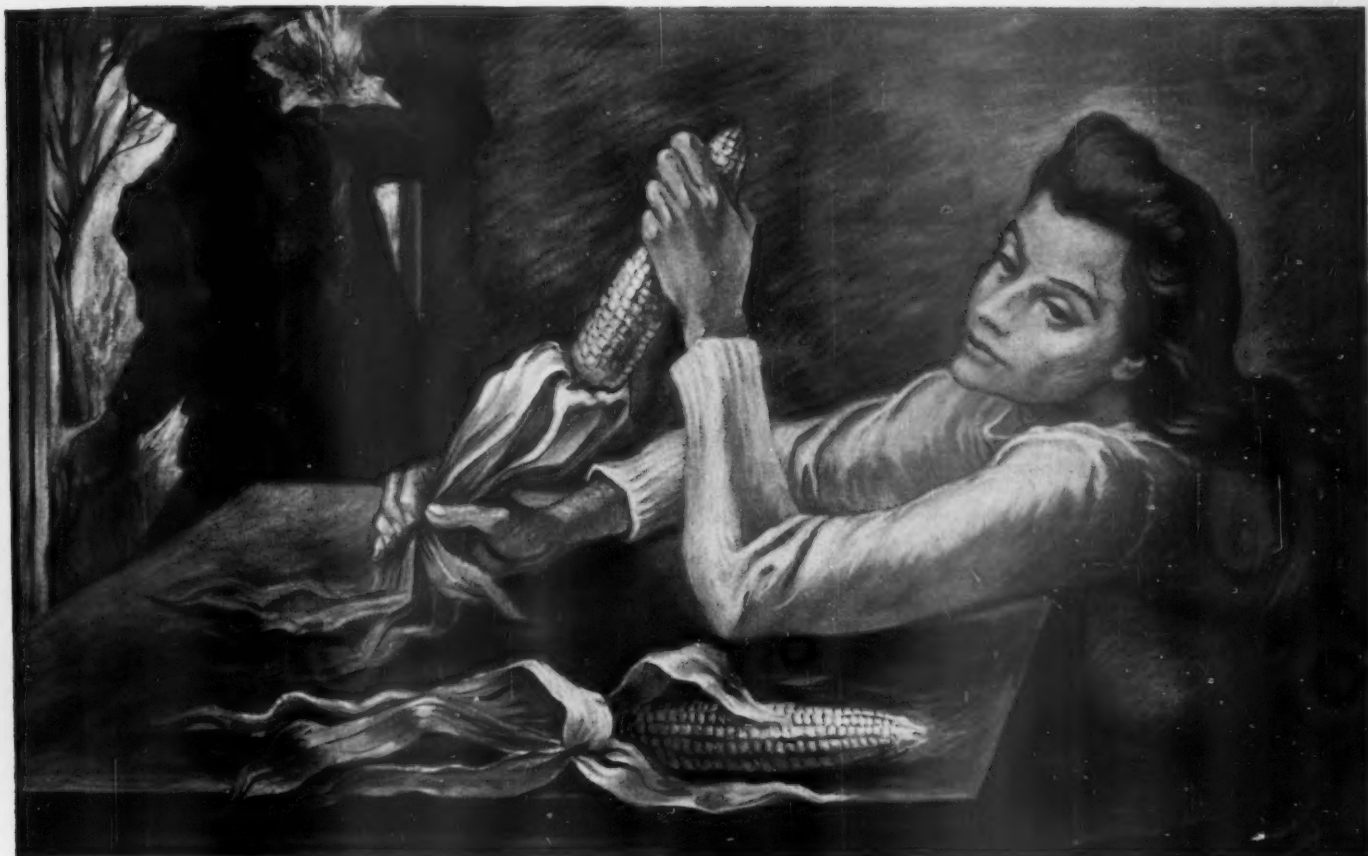
or six o'clock. Before I start painting I am absolutely familiar with everything I want to do. I have all the things I shall need in the studio, the models walking around, my sketches, preliminary drawings from nature and the models, a careful, exact-size charcoal drawing and of course my gouache painting. The studio is a veritable arsenal—Mrs. Mangravite has a more dramatic name for it.

"After I start I keep going without interest in even the luncheon bell. The canvas must be finished before dusk that day. When daylight fades the picture is either a success or a failure. If a failure, it is destroyed and a fresh start has to be made another day on another canvas. Painting over a canvas after the pigment has dried simply destroys its freshness. I want my pictures to have a wet look. I seldom use varnish. Thus it is that I sometimes paint a subject several times before I feel satisfied."

Mangravite's work is not confined to easel pictures. He has executed murals for the Hempstead, Long Island, post office and two twenty-foot-wide murals for the Atlantic City post office. He was awarded a gold medal for a mural painted for the Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1926.

His method of procedure in his mural work is unusual; he begins his drawings on a large scale, laying out the design the exact size of the wall space and working directly on large sheets of paper without preliminary studies at small scale. He does this in the belief that full-scale attack gives results not attainable when the design begins small and is later blown up to fill the actual





Rehn Galleries

**AUTUMN**  
Oil Painting by Peppino Mangravite

Photo by Juley



*Preliminary Study in Gouache for "Autumn" by Peppino Mangravite*  
Significant changes in composition in the final painting include the treatment at extreme left. Note how the tree, turned head of the hunter, and his upper arm turn the interest back into the center of the canvas



wall space. Areas which seem interesting enough in a small study are likely to be empty when greatly expanded, he declares. Not only that, the artist is likely to have a different feeling for the design when it is developed full-size.

Mangravite is an expert draftsman. His acquaintance with the human form is complete; he knows his anatomy. But while he could paint a perfect academic figure he never does. He distorts the figure to serve his objectives in expression and design. He usually elongates his figures and gives them diminutive feet. What he achieves by these devices only the student of his pictures can discover for themselves. Perhaps he will be reminded of El Greco who is one of Mangravite's masters. In his work the observant one may also see something of the influence of Delacroix, Goya, and Watteau, masters who have been a conscious influence.

It must be something of a triumph for Mangravite to have been honored by a one-man exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago, during the month of February, at the same time an important Goya Exhibition was being shown under the same roof.

Mangravite has very positive opinions upon the artist's place in society. The artist is to blame, he believes, for the weakness of his position in contemporary life. He still lives in his ivory tower and gives little heed to the needs of his fellows. Instead he calls them stupid because they do not understand him—and thus creates a gulf between artist and layman.

The world needs the artist who, if he directs his interest outward rather than inward, can contribute greatly to the richness of life. But he must change his entire point of view; think of himself as the giver of life—rather than a precious, specially privileged creature to whom the world owes both homage and a living. Not until he gets down among his fellows and tries to understand their spiritual needs can he hope to render that creative service which is his function in society.

Although Mangravite respects the artist as one of the most intellectual of men, possessing the greatest of potentialities, at the same time he considers him the most intolerant, and at times the most obnoxious. "For one thing," he says, "there is a complete lack of professional ethics among artists. The average artist of average ability is supremely jealous and that takes the form of criticism of his contemporaries. Asked his opinion of the work of a fellow artist, he will not hesitate to pronounce

*continued on page 30*

#### THE ARTIST AND HIS MODELS IN THEIR SUMMER HOME

*Pictures taken by Philip Grushkin who was Mangravite's assistant last summer*

- 1 During the summer months the Mangravites live on their farm in Adirondacks. The building in the foreground is the studio
- 2 Denise and Nina, 9 and 13, with their pony, Firefly
- 3 Mrs. Mangravite (Frances) and Denise sun themselves after a dip
- 4 This probably doesn't happen often. While not at work in his studio Mangravite is usually engaged with the manifold tasks supplied even a vacation farm
- 5 The Mangravites fill a happy summer with many pleasant memories picnics and frolics in the country





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# THE ARTIST'S FAMILY BY PEPPINO MANGRAVITE

Photo by Juley

*This is one of Mangravite's latest canvases. It was shown in his retrospective exhibition recently held in the galleries of the Art Institute of Chicago*

*The envelope with its "Bill Rendered" gives more than a hint of the sense of humor which is a heart-warming ingredient of the painter's personality*



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Photos by Juley

# SUMMER VACATION BY PEPPINO MANGRAVITE

Mangravite says he is interested in "the everlasting fugitive implications between men and women, in the subtleties of human relationships." He declares that he can get more tragedy, more of the lasting pathos of man, by painting him while he is smoking a cigarette, or taking a drink, but always in the company of the other sex. "All actual events are temporary—but only one thing is everlasting—what you capture of the moods of manhood"



THE ACTRESS  
by Peppino Mangravite

DANCING IN THE MOONLIGHT American Purchase Prize,  
Golden Gate International Exposition 1939



# TEMPERA

BY HERBERT E. MARTINI

## PART 4—SUITABLE SURFACES FOR TEMPERA PAINTING

The proper surface for the application of tempera, to obtain the best effects and most permanent results, is of the same importance as for any other painting method. We have seen that some temperas are more friable than others, but all may be said to have a degree of brittleness not found in oil colors. In view of this the primary requisite is that the material to be painted be rigid. Panels, canvas mounted on panels, or paper backed with heavy, stiff cardboard are recommended.

Successful tempera paintings can be made on stretched canvas, but the tempera painting must be very thin, or, when finished, given a degree of elasticity by covering it with a soft finishing varnish or glazing it with oil color.

The lean gum arabic tempera is very effective in direct painting on good quality watercolor papers of medium or rough surface properly mounted. Many artists prefer toned papers to white as they use the tone selected to become part of their color scheme.

When tempera is used as an underpainting for oil glazes, a gesso panel or gesso primed canvas is most advisable. These primings are also good for direct work because of the pristine whiteness of this type of ground. While gesso primed panels are available in some stores, it is better for the artist to carry his pride of craftsmanship further than just preparing his own tempera and to prepare his own gesso primings also. By variation of the proportions of the whiting filler, or the strength of the glue, he can produce a surface which will best respond to his way of working.

A good carpenter's glue in slabs (not chips or pulverized) or gelatin, similar in composition, but more refined in its processing, is used for the binder of the gesso. Four ounces of this by weight are soaked in one quart of cold water over night. The next day the glue is brought into complete solution by gently heating it in a double boiler. In making this solution the same precautions used in dissolving casein must be observed, for all glues vary so much that a solution made in the above proportions may be too strong and crack; or be too weak and make the gesso porous, too absorbent and too soft for sandpapering.

You first size the canvas or panel that you are going to prepare with this warm glue solution. While this sizing is drying, take a cupful of the size and mix it with two cupfuls of gilders' whiting. The whiting usually obtainable in paint

stores is quite grayish, but may be used if no other is available. The best kind is water-washed whiting, costing but a few cents more, but extremely white. This mixture of glue size and whiting is then strained through a cheese cloth and applied with a large brush to the canvas or panel after the sizing is dry. A canvas should receive no more than two thin coats, while a panel can take from four to six. The gesso mixture must be kept slightly warm to prevent it from stiffening through jelling. Each coat must dry before the next is applied, and it is good practice in applying the coats on a panel to change the direction of the brush strokes for each coat. After a day or two it is smoothed down with fine sandpaper. I have prepared panels with a surface as smooth and hard as ivory and found it most desirable for work having delicate detail. The article, which appeared in the November 1939 issue of *AMERICAN ARTIST*, formerly *Art Instruction*, by Aden Arnold gave one of the best descriptions for preparing gesso panels that I have ever read.

If in painting you work over and over, while the tempera is still wet—rather than painting direct and letting it stand—you may find the gesso dissolving slightly, enough to mix with your deep colors to cause a disagreeable milkiness. The gesso grounds described may be hardened, made water insoluble, by painting or spraying them with a formaldehyde solution.

Excellent primings for canvas can be prepared by using either the egg or casein tempera as a binder for the whiting. This is applied after the canvas has been sized as above. Some artists like to add equal parts of whiting and zinc oxide to either the glue or tempera binder as it gives greater whiteness and a closer knit texture. Ordinary oil-primed canvas can be used if the precaution is taken to scrub the surface thoroughly with some of egg or casein tempera vehicle to emulsify the surface oil usually found in such prepared canvas. It assures proper adhesion of the tempera paint film.

The pigments used in all painting technics are basically the same, though in some technics the nature of the vehicle precludes the use of certain pigments. This is particularly the case in the fresco buono method, because of the caustic alkalinity of the lime. On the other hand, many pigments like raw sienna and terre verte, which require abnormal amounts of oil in grinding, are excellent in tempera. Yes, in fact that

is one of the great advantages of tempera, for at most it contains less than twenty-five per cent of oil in ratio to the pigment, when compared with the same pigment prepared as an artist's oil color. That is why tempera colors are so unchangeable in tone during the course of years.

If you have ever seen dry colors you no doubt have been struck by their great luminosity and clarity, and wished you could use them in this form. In pastel colors you have the closest approach to this, with tempera a very close second. All of the pigments described in the series of articles in this magazine by Mylo Martellini\* can be used with tempera. Some artists mix their dry colors with their tempera right on the palette, either with brush or knife, for most of the dry colors can be got in impalpably fine powder form. Others like to grind them in distilled water on a glass slab with a glass muller, storing them in jars in this paste form ready for use. One should take into account, in the latter method, the extra water in the colors and add less water to the tempera when it is being thinned.

A white enameled palette with wells is handy for easel work. For larger paintings or murals a number of glass or earthen custard cups, or a tin muffin pan with six or eight divisions serves well. It is advisable to mix up only enough color as you go along for the work you can accomplish that day. If there are small left-overs these can be covered with several thicknesses of wet cloth until the next day. The palette, brushes and other utensils should be washed immediately, that is before they dry and set, with soap and warm water. If this is not done the brushes will be ruined. Special care should be taken to get all color and medium out of the base, where the hairs enter the ferrule. If the colors dry overnight on the enamel panel it sometimes means removing the enamel as well as the old paint.

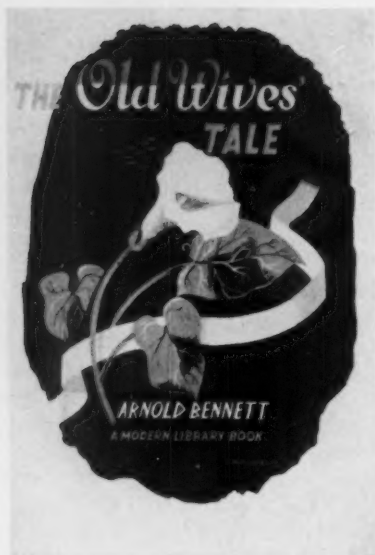
Either hair or bristle brushes are used for tempera painting, depending entirely on the effect to be achieved and the technic of the individual artist. A very handy thing is a large pail of clean water and a sponge. The latter can be used quickly to erase or wash off parts to be repainted. The sponge or even a damp rag can be used to lift out highlights, or for laying in large areas, as a glaze of local color.

continued on page 29

\*"Tools and Materials of the Painter's Craft" *AMERICAN ARTIST* (formerly *Art Instruction*) Apr., May, June, July, Aug., Sept., and Nov. 1938.

# E. McKnight KAUFFER

has come back to his native land



Many, no doubt, have thought of him as a Briton for he has worked in England during many years. Indeed he is one of the few "English" artists whose name is familiar to Americans and his influence upon the art of the British Isles has been considerable. But Kauffer was born in Montana. He journeyed to England in 1912, found a ready market for his brush and soon became prominent in English advertising art, particularly for his posters which struck a new note in originality and dramatic power.

Now it remains to be seen how America will receive this gifted American who has returned with something which is not British at all but is definitely Kauffer. The fact that Kauffer has been invited by the McCandlish Lithograph Corporation of Philadelphia to serve on the Jury for its "McCandlish Awards for 1941" is evidence of his prestige in this country. His selection as an arbiter of taste in such an important national competition suggests the probability of a considerable influence upon contemporary American design.

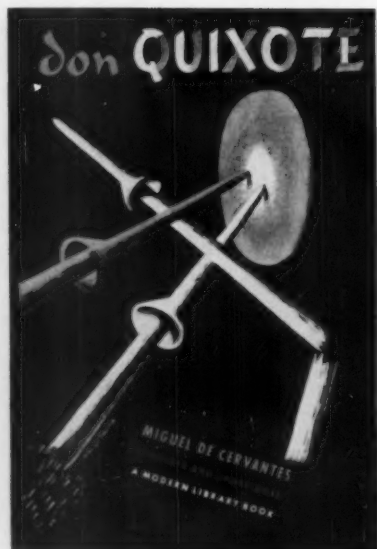
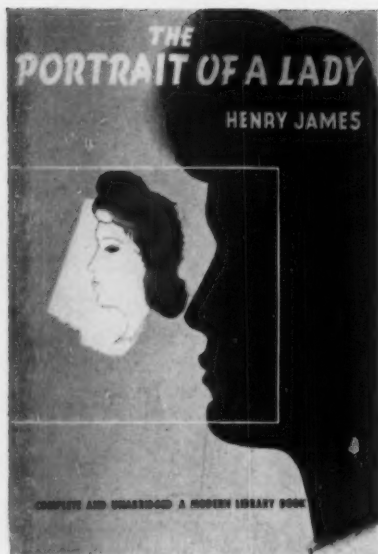
Already he is being sought by those who are looking for newness—something different; among them the Modern Library whose books are now being tailored in smart fashion by Kauffer. Some of these jackets, it will be evident to those who

read "The Experts Discuss Book Jackets" in the March number of *AMERICAN ARTIST*, violate the conventional concepts of book jacket design. But you cannot pay Kauffer to be conventional.

The English posters on the page opposite show Kauffer in the role of painter as well as designer—his landscapes have a highly individual character. They have been much reproduced in *The Studio* and other publications.

## BOOK JACKETS

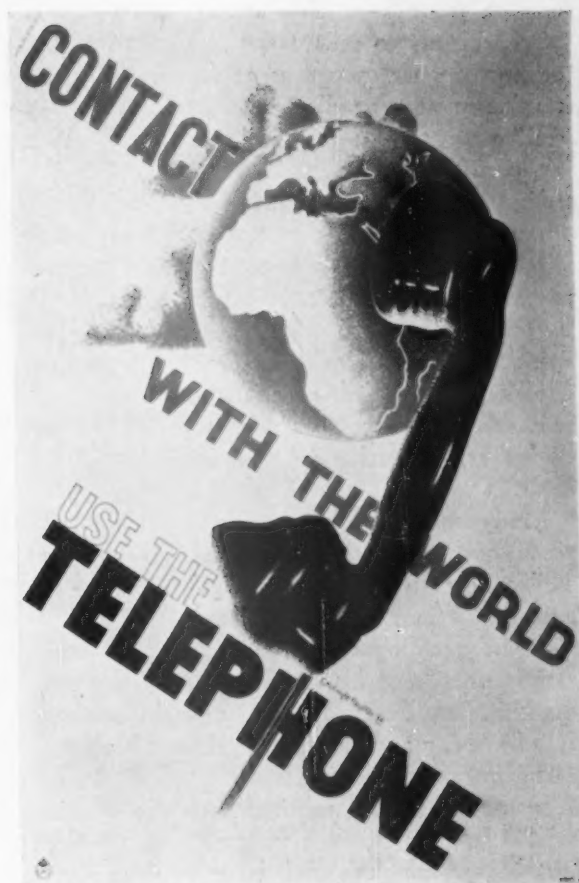
designed for the Modern Library  
by E. McKnight Kauffer







BRITISH POSTERS BY E MCKNIGHT KAUFFER





# TYPOGRAPHY as a career

PART

by MATLACK PRICE

3

## MODERN PRACTICE and TRENDS

At the level of typographic practice, the reader is more concerned with purely visual results than with the taste and training which went to produce them. The typographer, however, is concerned with detail continuously—and it must be assumed that he likes it.

So far as our career-typographer has now progressed, his training is assumed to have placed him in a position to begin practice. It will have become apparent that he has the necessary qualifications and the basic knowledge he will need for *authority*, and the technical familiarity he will need if he is to be, in fact, a professional, or, indeed of any practical value whatever when faced with the responsibility of actual work. The field of typography does not

recognize the amateur and can seldom afford to train him or to write off his mistakes which are always costly.

If, at this point, the typographer has conspicuous taste and creative ability, these important qualifications will begin to appear and to attract attention. While anyone working in typography can and should exercise taste in everything he lays out, no matter how slight or unimportant, he may not for some time be given much opportunity for creative work.

This will come later, when he has demonstrated his ability to master the routine work of the profession.

Of this routine work there is plenty to be done in an assistantship, whether you are assisting an art director, an editor or a production manager. You are expected simply to relieve any one of these higher executives of the routine of proof-reading and correcting proofs, and of seeing that all proofs keep moving to and from the printer until they are finally O.K. If you demonstrate *responsibility* in this, you become valuable, and may soon be given an opportunity to show what you can do creatively with type. Here experience is added to training and ability, and the possibility of higher professional standing is in sight.

With taste apparent and recognized, and with technical responsibility now established, the typographer may become an art director

with special typographic qualifications, the art editor of a magazine or, if his technical ability is more marked than his taste, he may become a production manager in an advertising agency, a large printing house, an art department or a publishing house.

In the publishing positions there are certain specialized differences between magazine and book publishing work, though sound basic typographic training

would form the groundwork qualifications for either.

Obviously the free-lance or consulting typographer needs to be more of a designer than an executive or an "organization man" on a staff. He needs exceptional taste, the combination of taste and knowledge that makes the authority of the stylist, and back of this the practical experience that successfully supervises typographic work too unusual or "special" for routine handling by the staffs of any organizations being served as clients. The free-lance practice of typography as a stylist involves working very much as an architect works—that is, at the level of creative profession.

Years of work at this level are necessary in order to attain the conspicuous authority and command in typographic styling which lead to really important work. Such consulting work, like that of stylists in other fields, is done on a fee basis, the size of the fee corresponding with the importance and distinction of the work done. Few professional careers afford greater satisfaction or opportunity for creative expression than may be here enjoyed.

The culminating phase of the typographer's work finds him widely recognized as an authority; he has designed a few (or many) type faces; he has done much distinguished work; he may be writing books on typography and lettering and he may have been

asked to teach. He will have reached a point where he may feel that he would like to impart and perpetuate something of what he has accomplished. He will feel that he owes it to his profession, and to his position in it, to restate the traditions and standards on which typography rests and by which, alone, it can survive. Typographic work worthy of the traditions of the craft can never be the work of impatient, careless, slipshod people,



*A characteristic modern typographic composition by Lester Beall, foremost modern designer of printed matter. This is a cover design in red and black. So modern in concept and design that the 19th century wood engraving also takes on an effect of something new and intriguing*



or people who are indifferent to standards or devoid of taste.

\* \* \* \*

This series of articles on typography should not be concluded without a few notes on some prominent American typographers, and on the trend of style in the printed page.

As in the case of architecture, the whole tradition of the printed page was, until the past ten years, based on precedent. In the printed page the formal character which Gutenberg adopted from Medieval manuscript books was carried on by the great printers of the Renaissance, with whose work every typographer, no matter how modern in spirit, should be familiar.

The idea of formality, of classical types, of conventional pages went on until the general breakdown of taste in the 19th Century—that breakdown so valiantly challenged by William Morris in England, in those brief but significant years of his Kelmscott Press. The full story of that press has been well told by one of Morris' fellow-workers, H. Halliday Sparling,\* who reminds us that, "Morris came to Printing as an all-around craftsman, already a conqueror in many fields . . . It was the time spent by him at the dye-vat and the drawing board, the loom and the glass-furnace, in the printing shed for chintzes and wall-papers, in the workshop of the cabinet-maker, at his work-table as calligrapher, designer, illuminator, draughtsman, wood-engraver which prepared and enabled him to become the Master-Printer of 1891-1896." The famous types which Morris designed for use in the Kelmscott books were the "Golden," "Troye" and the "Chaucer"—the last made for his superb edition of that classic, a book over three years on the press. (A copy recently sold for \$5,000.)

The importance of Morris' work had the effect of returning the attention of a few able designers, as well as the small but influential group of lovers of fine books, to the old standards of beautiful typography and printing. Directly influenced by Morris were Bertram G. Goodhue, designer of the *Merrymount* and *Cheltenham* type faces—and later there is no doubt but Goudy found much of inspiration in Morris' unique and exacting taste.

Will Bradley, still known to typographers for his once popular *Bradley Blackletter* type, combined with this re-styled Medieval letter, a curious decorative combina-



THE CENTAUR. WRITTEN BY MAURICE DE GUERIN AND NOW TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY GEORGE B. IVES.



Was born in a cavern of these mountains. Like the river in yonder valley, whose first drops flow from some cliff that weeps in a deep grotto, the first moments of my life sped amidst the shadows of a secluded retreat, nor vexed its silence. As our mothers draw near their term, they retire to the caves, and in the innermost recesses of the wildest of them all, where the darkness is most dense, they bring forth, uncomplaining, offspring as silent as themselves. Their strength-giving milk enables us to endure without weakness or dubious struggles the first difficulties of life; yet we leave our caverns later than you your cradles. The reason is that there is a tradition amongst us that the early days of life must be secluded and guarded, as days engrossed by the gods.

My growth ran almost its entire course in the darkness where I was born. The innermost depths of my home were so far within the bowels of the mountain, that I should not have known in which direction the opening lay, had it not been that the winds at times blew in and caused a sudden coolness and confusion. Sometimes, too, my mother returned, bringing with her the perfume of the valleys, or dripping wet from the streams to which she resorted.

Now, these her home-comings, although they told me naught of the valleys or streams, yet, being attended by emanations therefrom, disturbed my thoughts, and I wandered about, all agitated, amidst my darkness. 'What,' I would say to myself, 'are these places to which my mother goes and what power reigns there which sum-

*"The Perfect Type Page"—from the point of view of the traditionalist. A composition in Centaur type, designed by Bruce Rogers, with decorations to correspond. Such a page depends for its creation on finely exacting taste, not upon any novelty or surprise effects*

tion of Morris and Aubrey Beardsley and, a little later, his remarkable versatility made him the originator of a revival of the quaint 18th century American Colonial typographic style of the old Chap Books. This was largely in the half-decade 1895-1900, when there were stirrings of a revival of taste in all the graphic arts in this country. "Bradley, His Book" is a fascinating memento of the years when he ran his press in Springfield, Massachusetts, influencing printers and typographers all over the country and incalculably raising the level of American typography.

At the same time there was one of the greatest of all figures in the field of traditional typography, Theodore Low De Vinne, head of the old De Vinne Press, designer of beautiful books for the Grolier Club, "Dean of American Printers," and author of a series of splendid treatises on typography which should be required reading for anyone seriously entering the field. No less an authority is D. Berkely Updyke of the Merrymount Press, author of "A History of Printing Types."

At the level of infallible taste in typography is the work of Bruce Rogers, designer of *Montaigne* and *Centaur* types and long associated with the Riverside Press. His work must stand, at any time, as the most eloquent testimony of modern times to the changeless and unchangeable fineness of truly fine typography.

Similarly an exacting and sensitive traditionalist is T. M. Cleland, typographer and designer of decoration to accompany type. Essentially a stylist, everything which Mr. Cleland carries out typographically has the highest distinction. Untrained innovators who believe that anything which is new must be good, would do well to read, slowly and carefully, this paragraph on T. M. Cleland by W. A. Bradley:

"After the painful and protracted efforts toward originality which have been peculiarly the curse of our period, it remains more than ever patent that perfection is the only thing that is really original; and it is because he has understood this from the start, and wasted no time in trying to be 'different' that Mr. Cleland has achieved a very real and, indeed, fundamental difference from the majority of his contemporaries."

It would not be possible in such compass as the present article, to give space to Frederic W. Goudy proportional to either his attainment or to his influence. Starting with a minimum of equipment in Chicago, in 1890 (The Camelot Press), Goudy designed his first type in

\*"The Kelmscott Press and William Morris": Macmillan, London, 1924.



This montage of a few Goudy items includes a small reduction of a page from his great "Alphabet" book, which compared letter and type forms. The photograph was taken from some of Mr. Goudy's vital, autographic drawings for this book

1903—and his one-hundredth in 1936. This one-hundredth, which he named *Bertham* in memory of his wife and fellow-worker, marked thirty-three years of varying fortunes but of undeviating devotion to the cause of ever finer type-design and typography. More required reading for future typographers: "The Alphabet," "Elements of Lettering," "The Trajan Capitals," by F. W. Goudy. No basis of taste more sound or more necessary could be recommended. Certainly no designer of types has exerted a wider or more profound influence than that emanating from Goudy's work—up to the time when printers and advertisers began to be intrigued by "modern" European types—particularly the sans-serif types of Renner, Erbar and Gill and the "classic revivals" of Lucian Bernhard. This was about 1926-28, when we also began to feel premonitions of radical change in all design—not only in the graphic arts and on the printed page, but in industrial design and in the sacrosanct citadel of architecture itself.

Goudy's types, along with the traditional stand-bys Caslon, Garamond and their relatives and derivatives formed a sort of back-log of established taste, while the more sophisticated typographers who might still be a little shy of the European importations were staging a revival of popularity for Bodoni, the great Italian typographic innovator of the Napoleonic Era. The style-revival of 19th century types—including many of the



Three examples chosen to illustrate current trends in typographic design. The "Typographic Shortcut" layout shows the exploitation of dynamic obliques; the "Antoine: Saks Fifth Avenue," a generally oblique composition, with directional lines and photography integrated with type; the "Salon d'Elegance" is an announcement folder from the Ritz Hotel—again oblique, and featuring formal Typo-script, contrasted with a hand-drawn 19th century "fancy" letter

more depraved, though amusing and nostalgic varieties, was not to appear until 1933, and after.

\* \* \* \*

New type designs are one thing, but a complete style revolution in the whole appearance of the printed page, a complete break with tradition and precedent, this is quite something else.

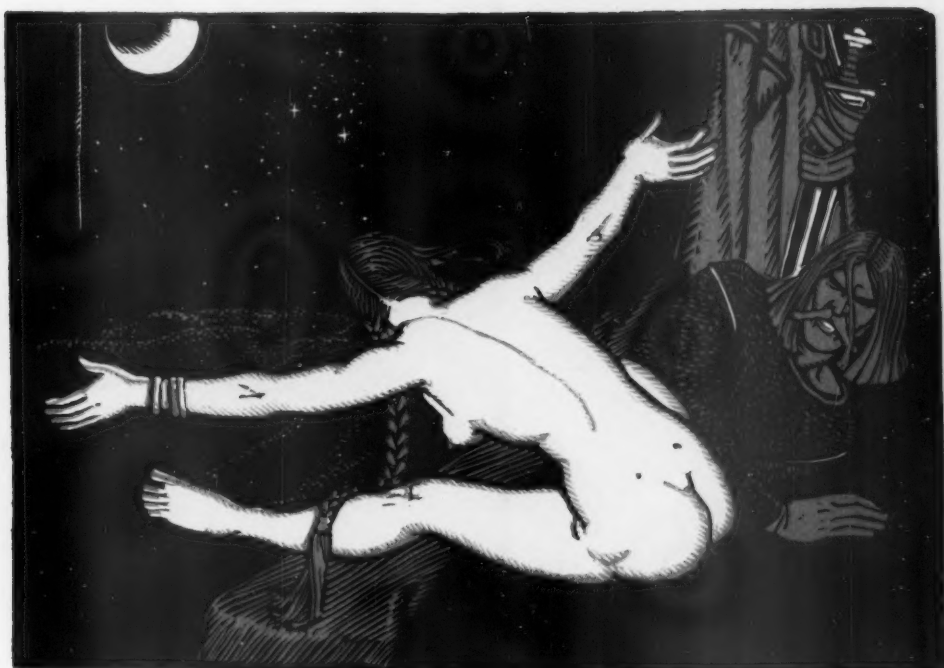
If one book could influence or direct a trend, the printed page would have been revolutionized in 1931 when A. Tolmer's "Mise en Page" appeared, prepared in France and produced in England, by *The Studio, Ltd.* Too few people saw this book at all, and of the few who did, I think surprisingly few grasped either its implications or its very clear and dynamic advice.

For a highly modern-minded designer Tolmer has an unusually lively appreciation of the uses to which classic material may be put by anyone who understands its significance. "Mise en Page," he tells us, "is not simply a printing operation." His sub-title is "The Theory and Practice of Layout"—but the French term goes far beyond the usual limited concept of "layout." He reminds the impatient modernist that, "The art of the great civilizations of antiquity furnishes fundamental laws of composition for the art of layout"—and presents a keen survey of the aspects of the book through five centuries

continued on page 21

American Artist





## A PORTFOLIO OF WOOD ENGRAVINGS IN TWO COLORS

BY FREDERICK TRENCH CHAPMAN



*These wood engravings were selected from a series of twenty executed by Mr. Chapman as illustrations for "Voyages to Vinland," translated from the original Greenland and Iceland sources by Professor Einar Haugen. The book will be published by the Holiday Press of Chicago. It is purely a labor of love, as the work is being done in spare time by a group of real craftsmen in the plant of the R. R. Donnelly Company of Chicago. The illustrations here shown were printed from electros made directly from the artist's original wood blocks. Mr. Chapman is a well-known American illustrator of magazines and books. He has great facility in a variety of graphic media*

*An exhibition of Mr. Chapman's work at the Society of Illustrators Gallery in New York from February 24 to March 7 included the entire series of wood engravings for the book, as well as posters made in 1918 for the Czechoslovakian Army and others designed for the British War Relief in 1941*



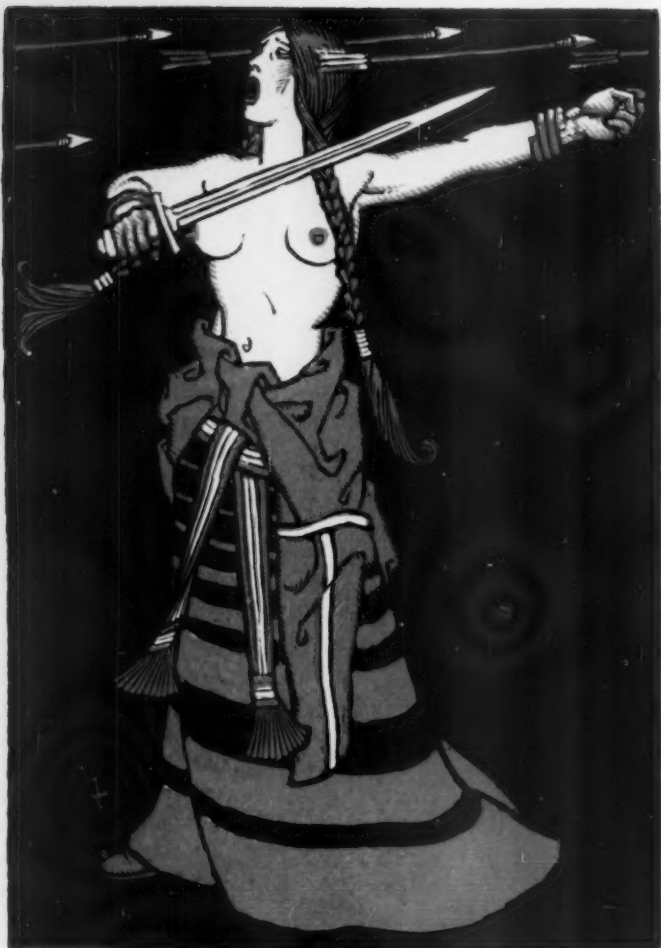




WOOD  
ENGRAVINGS  
BY  
FREDERICK  
TRENCH  
CHAPMAN

*Frederick Trench Chapman, a well-known illustrator of magazines and children's books, possesses an unusual sense of design which is admirably adapted to woodcut technic. His interest in woodcuts dates from 1918 when he was associated with Vojtech Priessig, a Czechoslovakian artist who introduced the use of linoleum in America at Teachers College, later at Wentworth Institute*





WOOD  
ENGRAVINGS  
BY  
FREDERICK  
TRENCH  
CHAPMAN





## TYPOGRAPHY AS A CAREER *continued from page 16*

of printing. When type made its appearance he considers that "the art of layout became subordinated to the art of printing."

"The art of layout is influenced by architecture and decorative art . . . and the art of the past can enrich modern conceptions." I know of no one previously identified with the design of the page who has so vividly dramatized the inter-play of old and new as Tolmer has done in both the text and the illustrations of "Mise en Page." He wrote a brilliant brief for freedom in the composition of the page, for the assimilation of unusual material and new combinations and contrasts of technics. Like Benrimo (and others of the more moderate understanders of Surrealism) Tolmer is convinced of the effectiveness of dramatizing disparity, or the unexpected juxtaposition of styles, forms, ideas or any material which may be used on the page. "In essence," says Tolmer, "the things that count are a matter of *feeling*." This is no formula, but distinguished work never has been nor ever will be produced by formula. His aim in presenting his brilliant book was "to infuse fresh life and a continually changing novelty" into the practice of typography and the whole appearance of the printed page.

Best known of all definitely non-traditional typographers and designers of printing is Lester Beall, who might be called, in a sense, "a typographic surrealist"—though let this not frighten anyone who is dismayed by that school.

His beliefs and practice are absolutely sound on their premises—that the whole page is more important than any of its parts, that material may be old or new (or both), that the type should be arranged dynamically, diagrammatically, in any case in such a way as to most clearly and dramatically convey its message. Mr. Beall is not so concerned with minute differences in type design except insofar as they contribute directly to the effectiveness of the other things on the page. And the "other things" are very important in his vision of the printed page. They may be old woodcuts, silhouetted photographs, typographic material, geometric line compositions or anything else—it doesn't matter, so long as the material tells the desired story in the most arresting and convincing manner. Certainly his cover design, with type used for its mass decorative value; and with a galloping horseman dashing into it, conveys an impression of an urgent announcement, brought to the eye in terms of action, as well as with the unexpected technic of the old 19th century wood engraving.

This article should conclude with a note on an unusually interesting experiment now beyond a mere idea—the press at Ranchos de Taos, New Mexico, which is limiting its production to one book a year. Hardly "commercial," in an age of mass production, but conducive to the preservation of the Morris standards of fine printing—in modern format. At Taos the type is hand-set, and the press is fortunate in its stylist, Tom Benrimo, one of the most brilliant of modern typographers and designers.

The range of the printed page, in its appearance is wide enough to engage designers of every shade of taste—but they must have taste. The manner may be anything from the ultra-conservatism of Renaissance tradition, through many style-cycles to Surrealism—but it is the possibilities of designing with type, not the limitations, which should be constantly in the thoughts of the typographer today.

\* \* \* \*

In the three articles here concluded we have had a look at Typography as a career. Next month we are going to take you on a visit to a Private Press where you will see—and enjoy—typesetting and printing being done for the sheer fun of it.

\* \* \* \*

## James Chapin

will be the feature artist in our May number. His article will demonstrate the creative processes of one of America's most famous artists, with reproductions of his drawings and paintings.

April 1941



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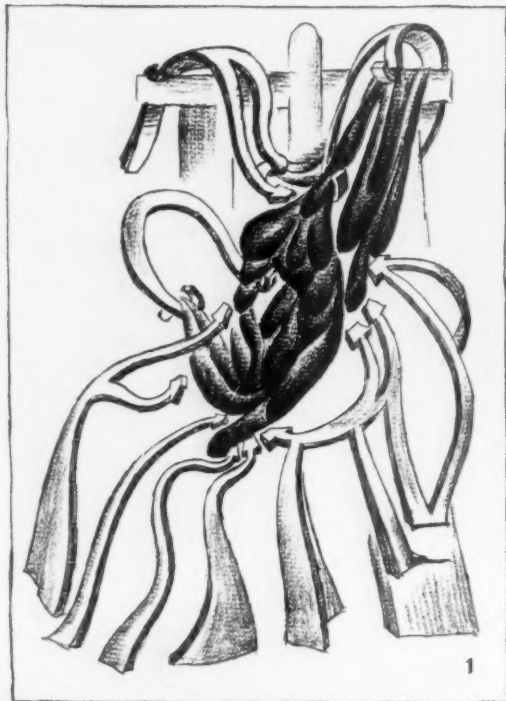
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# The Old Master Clinic

Conducted by  
Ernest Hamlin Baker



*This month*

*"Descent from the Cross" by Peter Paul Rubens  
Flemish School 1577-1640*

*The "Descent from the Cross," generally regarded as the supreme masterpiece of Peter Paul Rubens, was executed for the Antwerp Cathedral in 1612. Its claim to greatness rests to a large degree upon the masterful way in which it has been organized. It represents a magnificent orchestration of many exquisite individual melodies—infinite and beautiful variety functioning within a noble simplicity. This, at least, the supreme art must have.*

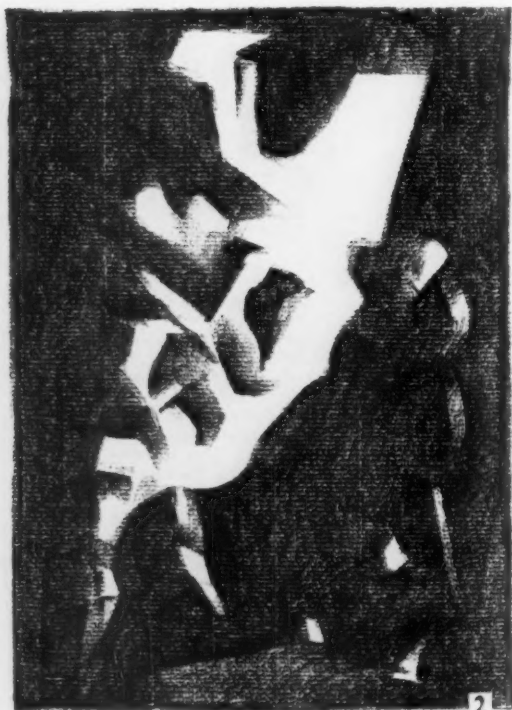
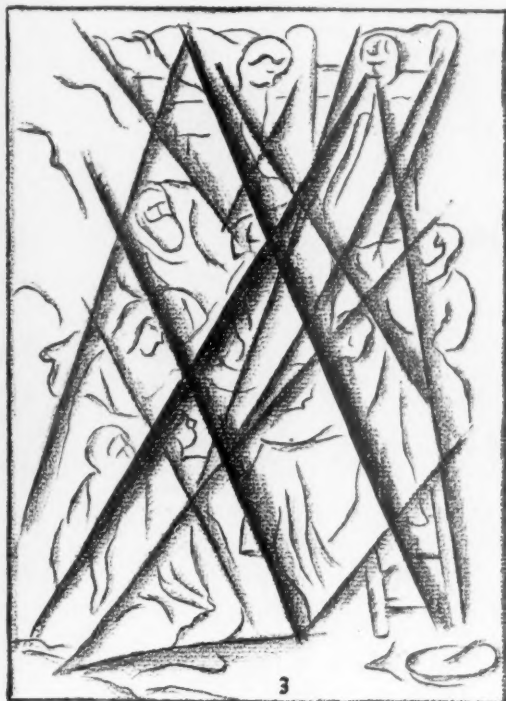


PLATE 1. The main movement of form in this composition is a downward and oblique one, which starts from the upper right corner and ends in the lower left. In order to isolate it visually, I have arbitrarily darkened the forms that contribute to it. Opposing, modifying, and retarding this dominant down-thrust, is a slightly lesser but powerful up-thrust, in the creation of which every other form in the composition, except perhaps the basin at the foot of the ladder, plays a definite part. This counteracting upsurge is expressed in the plate diagrammatically, by the arrow-like or hook-like abstractions, which stress the meeting points between the two oppositional movements, and suggest the source and the direction of each line of force. It is interesting to speculate upon the thematic appropriateness of this "down" vs. "up" form-movement. All the significant motions of Death are downward and earthward, a flight from the vertical to the horizontal; even as all the significant motions of Life are upward, skyward, and towards the vertical. When death occurs the vertical yields to the horizontal, and the force of gravity triumphs over the sun. The dead tree falls to earth and enfoldment begins. Then new growth rises from the death-enriched soil and the cycle is complete. So in this painting we find the living forms contributing upwardness, while the dead figure of Christ establishes downwardness and transition from the vertical to the horizontal. Whether or not this was consciously planned is unimportant. The interesting fact remains that in opposing down-thrust by upsurge, Rubens was stating in terms of form-movement, a true relationship between the two supreme and equally unconquerable forces—Life and Death.

PLATE 2. This arbitrary reduction of the composition to a study in two tones (with middle tones only faintly suggested here and there) is inter-



**The purpose of the Old Master Clinic** is to invite the reader to approach a work of art in an inquiring and creative spirit. As Baker says, "I should like these speculations to be thought of as provocative questions, rather than conclusive answers. For the most searching scrutiny cannot be expected to approximate more than a fraction of an artist's building methods. Yet the quest for that very fraction can bring a rewarding stimulation. It should prove interesting, among other things, to trace evidences of an intellectual control of intuitional processes—a control that appears to operate increasingly as art moves from simpler to more complex forms, reaching its peak in the superbly integrated form-relationships of the Old Masters."



esting both as abstract pattern and as marking with approximate accuracy the area of downward-moving forms. It is also interesting in the light of the preceding paragraph to note how it sharpens the transition from the vertical to the horizontal. And what a good job of holding in balance is done by the scattered bits of glowing lights in the lower-right section of the painting.

**PLATE 3.** This plate suggests the extent to which Rubens employed diagonal lines and pyramidal forms in expressing the subject's drama and excitement. The diagonal is doubtless the most exciting line that artists know. Especially worth noting are the twin-like angle peaks that rise to the top like the points of a straddling letter M—and the fact that these main diagonals traverse the composition's entire length, thus increasing its structural strength and its unity.

**PLATE 4.** This composition is really amazing for the length and uninterruptedness of its interweaving line-continuities. The course of the longest continuity is here shown in the darker tone. It not only passes through every important area in the design but also brings the eye back to the point from which it started. If the reader will take the trouble to search out only the most obvious of these continuities he will not only be astounded by the complexity of their interweaving, but will, I believe, come to the conclusion that many of them could have resulted only from cool calculation.

**PLATE 5.** Here I have tried, by reducing each form to an elemental mass, to accent its three-dimensional relationship with the rest of the composition: to stress, in other words, the sculptural quality which I feel plays a large part in the power and grandeur of this masterpiece. By considering it as an arrangement of forms in the round, and studying the inward and outward lean of the bodies, the tilt of their heads, the thrusts forward and back of their limbs, and the part played by each smaller form in preserving largeness of mass (to suggest a few of the many stimulating approaches), the reader will be richly repaid for his effort.



#### About Ernest Hamlin Baker

To get better acquainted with the author read our feature article of the May 1938 number (then *Art Instruction*) and "Baker Capitulates" in the January 1940 number. In the latter Baker subjects his own mural painting (for the Wakefield, R. I., Post Office) to his clinical analysis. The best known of Baker's current work may be seen on the covers of "Time."





Photography by  
Robert McAfee



Eva Auld Watson engraving a block for a three-color print

# Printmakers IN A BERKSHIRE HAY BARN

Continuing Stephen Lee Renwick's Interview with Ernest and Eva Watson

For our discussion of tools and equipment for the making of color woodcuts suppose we look at the objects on the table in the above photograph.

First the blocks themselves which, by the way, are not wood but linoleum. The Watsons use both wood and linoleum, according to the requirements of the particular job. They prefer linoleum for most of their work because their designs usually exploit mass rather than fine detail. Linoleum can be engraved faster and in some ways it is easier than wood to handle. The belief that it is only suited to large-scale work is certainly belied by many of the Watsons' prints which have considerable fine detail.

Linoleum becomes harder with age as the oil dries out. By keeping stock on hand for several years the Watsons find the material even harder than many woods, and the engraved blocks stand up perfectly—even in the printing of large editions.

But these artists never refer to their prints as "linoleum cuts" because, to quote Mr. Watson, "the term woodcut through long usage has acquired a meaning which applies to any print made from a relief block engraved by the hand of the artist. It is a term that is uni-

versally understood. What difference does it make whether the blocks be wood or linoleum? To call them linoleum cuts is to cause confusion in the popular mind which associates linoleum only with floor covering. Suppose that tomorrow we discover still another material suitable for woodcuts; call it 'plastigraft.' Must the artist who uses it then call his prints 'plastigrafts' or 'plastigraft cuts'? It would be as sensible as 'linoleum cuts.' It is hard enough to educate the layman without expecting him to differentiate between prints made from wood and prints from linoleum."

The Watsons use  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch Armstrong's white linoleum glued to a heavy cardboard backing, either  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch wall-board or a thick mill board. The blocks are thus about  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch thick, rigid enough and light to handle. The glue is spread on the back of the linoleum with a palette knife and the blocks are put in the press to dry overnight.

When dry they are sanded on the four edges to make them true and smooth. The face of the linoleum is scraped with discarded razor blades until it is as smooth as a piece of glass.

The original drawing, in pencil or charcoal, can then be "offset" to the block. First the block is washed with household ammonia and while still damp laid down on the drawing and put under the press with as much pressure as possible. The pattern, offset from paper to linoleum surface, is in reverse on the block. The block is

veiners      gouges

sprayed with fixatif and the engraving begun. If the offset is not clear and sharp the area to be in relief is brushed in with india ink, a good practice in any event as it makes engraving easier.

I noted that both in offsetting and in printing the Watsons first place paper on the press bed and then lay the inked block down upon it, reversing the traditional practice of laying paper down upon the inked block. "The reason for this," explained Watson, "is found in the different method we employ for registry of color blocks. The use of the 'finder' [described last month] makes this procedure inevitable. The Japanese, you recall, cut notches on the face of the block and the paper is laid down in the block, fitting into a corner notch and against a side notch."

The method of "working up" a set of color blocks was described in the March number, so we need only speak here of the engraving itself. The tools shown are of two types, veiners and gouges. The former are U-shaped and come in various sizes. They are for the real engraving work. The gouges—sort of curved chisels—remove the background after



the outlines have been engraved. The Watsons do not use the V tools, but occasionally employ the knife.

Except for broad background areas the cutting is very shallow. As the engraving proceeds, talcum powder is occasionally sprinkled on the block, then rubbed off with the palm of the hand leaving the pattern standing out clear against the white background. This is to enable the artist to foresee the effect of his engraving without actually pulling a proof. The photograph shows talcum applied to certain areas of the block that Mrs. Watson is engraving.

The three cans on the table each contain one pound of "Mixing White (extra heavy)." This is the only printing ink used by the Watsons, who mix it with high-grade artists' oil colors. In the picture above, Eva Watson—palette knife in hand—is shown mixing a batch of color, adding color from studio tubes to a quantity of white from the can. A few drops of linseed oil from the bottle are usually needed to bring the color to correct consistency, though oil must be used with caution.

Let us now take a look at those marble slabs where the real creative part of color printing is performed. Note the piles of pigment from which films of color have been "rolled-up" with the brayers. When these ink films have been brought to the proper consistency they remind one of satin. "The usual beginner's mistake," says Watson, "is to roll out too thick a film. One should use as little pigment as needed, and this is likely to be far less than the novice considers necessary."

The brayers on the slab are about  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 1$  inch; some of them are of larger diameter. The one hanging on the rack is  $6 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$  inches, but the smaller sizes are more popular with the Watsons because they are more flexible for the very free kind of treatment they give their blocks.

The proper brayer is made of a gelatin composition, not rubber. Brayers of various sizes are sold by several supply houses. Larger sizes can be had from the American Type Founders, who will also recast old brayers. Brayers get hard with age and in extreme changes of temperature they "sweat"

*continued on page 31*





# From Amateur to "Pro"

BY HOWARD W. ARNOLD

"An artist's tools for expressions are pencil, brush and color, not words." Thus I protested when asked by the Editor to write something out of my experience as a commercial artist which would be helpful to the youngsters who are at the beginning of their professional careers. But the Editor finally had his way and the following is offered for what it is worth to all who may care to listen.

Let's start with that portfolio of samples—we all have to start that way. You spend hours producing those beautiful specimens which your friends will pronounce "so clever." But after fruitless days of interviews your precious samples have worn thin; they seem to be less and less a part of you. What is the trouble?

It is possible that your specimens, no matter how well executed, are not directed at the market for which your talents are—for the moment—acceptable. Perhaps they do not conform to the need for speed of production or economy in reproduction. They may be too ambitious. It is wiser to show simple drawings than elaborate "arty" color designs. The buyer is more apt to try you out on the small run-of-the-mill work than on more complicated assignments that naturally go to experienced artists; he can't afford to take chances on a beginner with the larger, more complicated jobs. So make your samples bear on the type of work that is open for your present skill. You may prefer to paint in color—and think you are pretty good at it, but if you are a good candidate for the commercial art field you should find plenty of adventure in creating a series of simple line drawings, say for newspaper reproduction. No matter how unimportant a small job seems to you, remember it is of no small consequence to the buyer. So treat it with as much respect as though it were a double-page spread. Prove yourself a real craftsman in everything you do.

Another thing: a few excellent samples along a given line will interest the buyer more than a loosely collected variety, and they will be longer remembered. Do not scatter your talent. Concentrate on a special field, then select a few of the leading firms in that field and show them your work often.

While on the subject of samples I would like to stress the fact that originality is still sought after. You may be tempted to copy the style of some successful artist; it is easier than hewing a new path of your own. I have met more than one beginner who has adopted this method of "crashing the gates."

Earl Oliver Hurst went into this mat-

ter of plagiarism—the copying of another's style—in his article on last month's Guild Page; and if you have not read it you should. The point I want to stress here is, that in emulating some successful artist's style you are submerging your own individuality—if you have any—and you are the real victim of this unethical practice.

Set yourself to tasks which can only be done in your own individual way. Compel yourself to do memory work, work that requires real creative thinking, such as illustrations of dramatic incidents you

## The Guild Page



On this page each month the **ARTISTS GUILD, Inc.**, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, will present information relative to conditions in the art market and will discuss the steps taken by the Guild to protect the artist's interests. Pres., Harry T. Fisk, Vice Pres., Warren Baumgartner, Sec'y, Earle B. Winslow, Treas., George Rupprecht.

have observed in the streets. You'll find it difficult at first but you will be developing your own individuality in doing it.

Honor your deadlines! Business cannot be made up of weak promises. "I guess so," is never in order. The question is, "Can you do it?" The drawing you create will employ hundreds of other people in allied lines; therefore a delay on your part delays others. You must be responsible. You will often be given a rush order when no necessity for a rush exists, but it is good training for ability to meet the ever present deadline.

You can arrive at a price for your work by understanding how your buyer sells his time. Printers and lithographers adhere strongly to the hourly basis. The agencies seem to be more evasive. For your own protection, try to establish an hourly rate and stick to it. In time you might give yourself a raise per hour because of increased demand on your time. You have only time and skill to sell—make the most of it, but don't overvalue your services. Business has a way of leveling a person. Remember that the business man has to make a profit and your valuation on your drawings must be related to that. Sometimes this value can be arrived at by some knowledge of how the drawing is to be used. You have a right to ask what is to be the run of a given order, 10,000, 50,000 or more. Is the advertisement local or national? May there be repeat orders expected using the same plates? A little experience in

estimating on the rough cost of printing will help you to understand why two drawings of like nature will bring two different prices. You cannot afford to try to ladle your talents out like so much sugar and beans for so much.

Of course your interest in your drawings does not cease when they have been bought and paid for. You are anxious to have them well reproduced because the final printed job becomes an advertisement for your own work. The more you know about engraving and printing the closer the result will be to your originals. While this is the responsibility of the art director and the production man, your ideas and cooperation are generally welcomed. They like to have your O.K. along with theirs.

Many will find their opportunity in the smaller cities where the market is different from that in New York or Chicago. You must become familiar with that market and gage your prices by it. This is the failing of so many of the fine painters. They do not realize the vast market for their original art among the lower income brackets. They have not learned what the commercial man knows—that the law of supply and demand, and the ability to pay, control their income.

Getting a start is the student's first and very real problem. The usual procedure is to fill a portfolio with samples and begin a tour of the city's advertising agencies. That is usually a heart-breaking experience, particularly today when the art studios have a near monopoly in the field. I'm going to suggest a plan which I believe feasible, though so far as I know it has not been tried.

Briefly, the idea is for students to organize an embryo art studio while still in school in preparation for the establishment of a studio upon graduation. A good letterer, a specialist in layout, a figure man, a fashion artist, an industrial designer, perhaps a photographer, and if possible a retoucher would form such a group qualified to handle quite a variety of work.

There may be protests that the type of work likely to come to beginners is not likely to be lucrative enough to justify such a pooling of abilities. The protest may be legitimate but consider these facts. The earnings of most beginners are bound to be small in any event. Experience, after all, must be had one way or another. During the short life of this student-professional organization—it is not likely to last more than two years—each member will be serving an apprenticeship in business management and

continued on page 32





## VENUS *Drawing* PENCILS

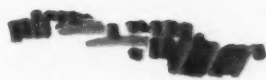
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**A**



**A.** The dark background behind the house consists of broad, curved, short strokes in various directions, with a flat Venus 6B pencil point. Note the care taken to indicate proper contrast between light and dark values and sharpest contrast at point of interest (the house).

**B**



**B.** The water is indicated with strokes, as shown above, with Venus 2B. Beginning and ending of stroke are light and delicate, with increasing pressure at the middle.

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**ART'S UNKNOWN MAN**

**Providing Picture Ideas**

**By George Britt**

By special permission of the  
New York World-Telegram

"Here are two guys kicking that some-  
how I stole their idea for a drawing  
about an automobile," said a magazine  
artist opening his mail.

"One of them is a pest that I've had  
experience with before. He claims every-  
thing he sees in print. The other proves  
it was his original idea by sending me  
the newspaper clipping that suggested it  
to him a month ago. Yet that same idea  
has been in the office for a year, saving  
for the auto show."

The average successful artist thinks  
up his own ideas, or most of them. Other  
artists are dependent on gag men—even  
have them on permanent retainer. As  
between the two, competent pen-and-  
brush men to make the pictures are a  
lot easier to locate than minds fertile in  
fresh and funny hunches.

As one gag man estimates the top  
flight of the comic drawing market—  
Saturday Evening Post, Collier's, Esquire  
and New Yorker—75 per cent of all  
the drawings are hunched by not more  
than 10 men. The profession is that ex-  
clusive and specialized. And the gag  
men never draw a line.

"In a single issue of one magazine  
last month," said this informant, "there  
were six drawings based on my ideas. I  
sold them. Six different artists drew the  
pictures, got at least 75 per cent of the  
money and built up their names—and  
who ever heard of me?"

The New Yorker every week receives  
about 2000 ideas for drawings, mostly  
from free-lance jokesmiths or would-bes.  
Winnowing the haystack, the editors buy  
on an average half a dozen ideas, paying  
perhaps \$15 or \$20 apiece.

The most successful free-lance gag  
man last year sold 185 picture ideas to  
a single magazine, and his total income  
was around \$10,000. There aren't more  
than half a dozen who earn a fair living.  
In a different classification entirely are  
the comic strip hunch men and the radio  
and theatrical gagsters.

Russell Maloney, now a star writer on  
the New Yorker, made his acquaintance  
with that magazine by sending in picture  
ideas while a college student. E. B.  
White used to originate lots of ideas.  
The late Heywood Broun was another  
good source of pictures that clicked.

Years ago, when Life was the leading  
comic magazine, the late Arthur Craw-  
ford was the champion idea man, and he  
had a system all his own. Originating  
the hunch, he paid an artist to draw the  
picture, signed by the artist's name "plus  
A. C." and then sold it himself.

Here is the way a simple idea may be  
passed along and manipulated—the  
thought of a man getting sore at his  
continued on page 29

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(Incidentally, some artists use a large cake of "ARTGUM" as a pen holder, simply stabbing their pens into it. It's handy!)

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## TEMPERA

continued from page 11

Although the primary object of this series of articles has been a thorough, general acquaintance with tempera as an underpainting to be finished with oil, artists working in direct tempera may be interested in knowing just what protective coating is necessary for the finished picture.

There are two we can recommend. A good damar varnish for a glossy finish; as this type of varnish varies in consistency with different manufacturers more than one coat may be necessary if a gloss is desired. The other varnish, the dissolved beeswax kind; this retains the matt effect of tempera, or after having been applied is capable of a dull gloss by polishing it with a soft cloth or soft-haired brush. The one important thing to bear in mind is that all varnishes change the tone of the pigment to about the appearance of the tempera color when first applied, that is, while still wet.

★ ★ ★

## ART'S UNKNOWN MAN

continued from page 28

work and tearing it up. Every writer has become disgusted with a story and torn it up. Well, a magazine bought this idea, and its artist drew an architect amid disorder saying to a client, "Sorry! Your house will be delayed because I got mad at the plans."

But it didn't ring the bell, so the magazine passed it on to another artist. Finally it appeared—a watchmaker before a bench piled with smashed gear wheels and broken springs. He was saying, "Sorry! I haven't got your watch ready today. I got mad at it."

\* \* \*

When the World's Fair first opened several of the professional gag men used to hang around the main attractions to pick up funny comments. Overheard remarks are a real source of comic ideas but a minor one. Most of the lines with zip and lilt have been hammered out by a disciplined imagination.

"Ideas are in the air," an artist told me. "We read the same papers and see the same movies, and many men respond in about the same way. That is why it is unsafe to look at anybody's ideas unless you have an understanding with him. He'll think you stole something from him that you thought of yourself."

"There's a gag man out in St. Louis who sends me a dozen or so ideas every week, and I buy a few from him. He has them elaborately numbered and indexed and can trace them into next year. But unsolicited ideas, if I know what they are, I return unopened. I don't take a chance."



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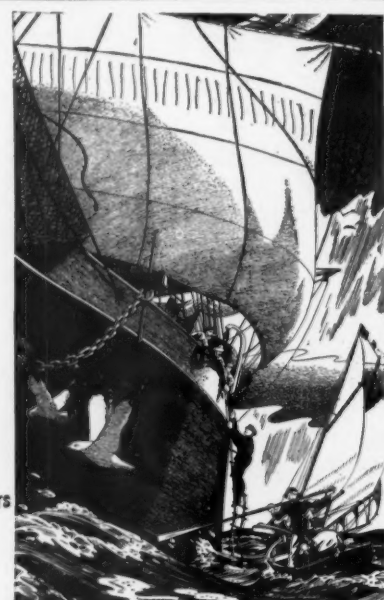


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# HIGGINS



### PEPPINO MANGRAVITE *continued from page 8*

it 'Lousy!' Imagine the effect of this on the layman! Where else in professional life can such lack of ethics be found? Did you ever hear a doctor criticize another member of his profession? If the doctor were as unethical as the artist the public would soon have as little confidence for the medical profession as much of it has for the painter's art. Before we can accomplish our desired ends, we need a change in spirit, and this change must come first from the artist and all those who are responsible for the moral and mental enlightenment of society. Indeed, it will be such a change in the artist himself that will bring fullest freedom and widest scope to the growth and acceptance of the arts in this country."

It is fortunate that an artist of such practical idealism is interested in educa-

tion and is willing to devote some of his time to students. In the winter he teaches painting at Cooper Union and the Art Students League in New York, and he has a class in mural painting at the Art Institute of Chicago. His influence is further extended through his lectures and his writings.

Mangravite has great personal force and charm. His love of life and his eager participation in it are at once felt in meeting him. Harry Salpeter in an article on Mangravite, in the September 1939 issue of *Esquire*, wrote a paragraph of description which is worth repeating:

"Mangravite is a good working approximation of the Latin spirit. He has the vivid, nervous, mercurial look and movements of the highly sensitized and impressionable Italian. He is a short, compact figure of a man, neither lean

nor heavy, and of high maneuverability. His eyes can be disturbingly alert and alive and his mind has given evidence of being a keenly conscious and participating one. You know that he is a mature person because his head is grey but his mustache and thick eyebrows are still predominantly black with youth, so that he seems to contain within his body the qualities of two generations. He looks like a man quick to temper and like one also whose anger you would do well not to stir up, and I have heard that he can be in a murderous rage one moment and butter and honey the next. He has learned to divert his anger into the channel of a devastating sort of politeness and his younger daughter, who has the key, will sometimes say of him, 'Mummy, Dad is in a fit of politeness.'"

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## PRINTMAKERS

continued from page 25

and refuse to hold the ink. To give good results—the composition should be fresh and soft so that it makes perfect contact with the block.

When printing a large edition, the Watsons mix large batches of color and preserve them in tubes (empties can be bought from manufacturers of printing inks). If the inks are to be used the following day they can be preserved in little piles placed in a pan of water which protects them from the air. When the colors are to be put aside for a considerable time they may be placed in piles on a piece of glass and set on a shelf. The tough skin which soon forms on the outside will protect the pigment almost indefinitely, and when it is removed a week or a month later the color will be fresh and soft, ready for use.

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\* \* \*

Next month this series will conclude with a discussion of printing operations.

## SOCIETY OF ILLUSTRATORS

The spring Course of Lectures to be held at the Society of Illustrators, 128 E. 63rd Street, New York, will begin on Mar. 6 with Norman Rockwell as speaker, introduced by Harold von Schmidt, president of the Society.

Mar. 13—Floyd M. Davis introduced by Wallace Morgan

Mar. 20—Howard Scott and Adolph Treidler on "The American Poster Problem"

Mar. 27—Earl Oliver Hurst and Ernest Button, art director, Young & Rubicam

Apr. 3—Albert Dorne and Fred Ludens, art director, Lord and Thomas

Apr. 10—Dean Cornwell introduced by John Holmgren, vice pres. of the Society

Apr. 17—Roy Spreter introduced by Ray Prohaska

Apr. 24—James C. Boudreau, dir., Pratt Institute Art School, "The Artist in National Defense: Publicity, Camouflage, Bomb Shelters"

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## FROM AMATEUR TO "PRO"

continued from page 26

professional practice, in preparation for the establishment of his own studio. Each will have an opportunity to go out and sell the combined activities of the group and all will learn how to cooperate in the production of work which calls for varied skills.

Because each member is a specialist does not necessarily imply a limitation of his development: as the work increases, the figure man will be doing layouts and the layout man doing finished lettering, etc. Each will lend a hand when and wherever the need arises and his abilities permit.

In establishing such a group there would have to be a pooling of financial resources. A certain amount of capital is needed for rent and for equipment. The latter, by the way, is important. Labor saving devices and materials of various kinds are in common use by the studios with which you will be competing.

I think that this is one way students can face a buyer with confidence, for in numbers they will be able to create a free-lance service. Most schools that have splendid assistance in organizing such groups. In smaller cities this would be something entirely new; that is, to convince the printers, department stores and manufacturers, that they can be served by collective distribution of art work to the best student talent available.

It goes without saying that an acquaintance with successful men and women in the field is of great advantage to the beginner and most artists are friendly and helpful to their younger brethren. In the Artists Guild you will find sympathetic interest in your problems. Its members will welcome you and help you in any way they can. Do not hesitate to ask for an appointment—by phone or letter—for a conference with someone who is in a position to advise you.

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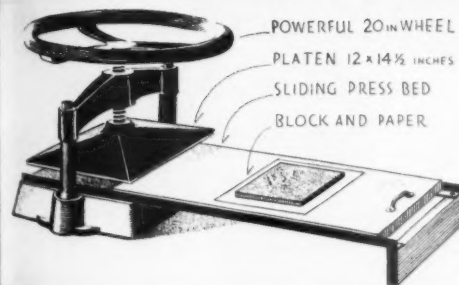
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The most effective ways to realize these values will be discussed from various angles at the eight general sessions and the thirty smaller group conferences which are scheduled in the program of the E.A.A. Convention.

There will be exhibits of art work from grade schools, high schools and professional art schools. Exhibits of materials and equipment will acquaint art teachers with new teaching aids. Over 1500 persons are expected to attend the convention. About 200 members of the Association will have some part in the program.

### WHAT IS AN ARTIST?

Persons gifted with an artistic temperament are more sensitive to beautiful effects than are others.

The artist (limiting the term artist to painters and sculptors) sees beauty—colors, lines, movements, as in a landscape, a face, a figure, or a breaking wave, or a steam-shovel, that the ordinary person does not see. It is here that the artist finds his opportunity to enrich the lives of others.

It should be the province of the artist to so record these effects that the observer, who never saw them, or only partially, can see them, or see them more fully. When he leaves this field he is no longer an artist.

**FRANK F. FREDERICK**  
Director, The School of Industrial Arts  
Trenton, New Jersey

\* \* \*

With this—except the last sentence—we are in hearty agreement. But why exclude anyone who in any way is trying to bring beauty into the world? Ed.

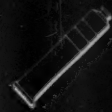
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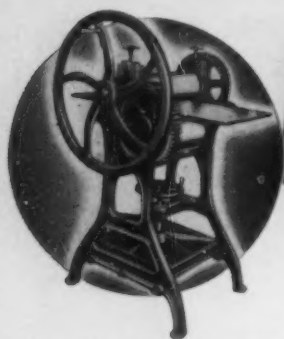
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## SAMPLE KIT

The Craftint Mfg. Co., 210 St. Clair Ave., N.W., Cleveland, Ohio, offers free to its listed customers a complete sample kit of Craftint products. The kit includes singletone, doubletone and washtone papers, opaque white, drawing ink, Kleen-stik, etc. To other than listed customers there is a nominal charge for the kit. Please write direct to the company, mentioning AMERICAN ARTIST.

## LIGHT

Modeling with Light is the title of a paper which explains the method used to determine the specification for the special artificial luminous environment required for a cultural display of sculpture; gives the results attained in practice; describes the equipment designed to execute the requirements, and comments on the further application of the equipment to commercial displays. If you're interested in good lighting we think you'll want this paper. It's yours for the asking by writing to AMERICAN ARTIST.

## LIQUID FRISKETS

Nothing new under the sun? We think not. Recently we have been introduced to two different friskets or masks which seem to have extremely interesting possibilities. They are new: both are liquid.

The first of these is called *Masque*, and is obtainable from the Artists' Supply Co., 15 West 45th St., New York. It is applied with pen or brush wherever it is desired to protect the surface from a wash or spray of tone. For a reversed effect of lettering, for example, one would letter with *Masque*, using pen or brush, next carrying a wash or spray over it. When dry the *Masque* would be rubbed away, much as one removes rubber cement, leaving the paper clean.

*Maskoid* is the second and somewhat similar material. It is described as "a safe liquid protective coating for all good quality papers, photographic papers and films, celluloid, cellophane, wood, glass, and all semi-porous and non-porous materials." A fixatif is available to use over colors over which *Maskoid* is to be applied. For further information address *Maskoid*, 503 Grand St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

## INK OFFER EXPIRES

The end of March will bring to a close the period for taking advantage of the special introductory offer by Artone Ink Co., of their black and extra dense black ink. The company announces the publication of a booklet covering various kinds of drawing inks; including black, colored and silk screen inks and their uses. This booklet may be procured by writing to the company at 34 East 12th St., New York.

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